



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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July 27, 2023

The Honorable Ruben Gallego
U.S. House of Representatives
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sylvia Garcia
U.S. House of Representatives
2419 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Amodei
U.S. House of Representatives
104 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Gallego, Garcia, and Amodei,

On behalf of The United States Conference of Mayors and the over 1,400 cities we represent, we write to support H.R. 3965, also known as the Extreme Heat Emergency Act of 2023. This legislation would amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to include extreme heat in the definition of a major disaster under Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

As you know, local elected officials have been on the frontlines in taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency to adapt to climate change impacts. However, despite the progress being made towards reaching our climate goals, extreme weather events continue to become both stronger and more frequent. Currently, many of our communities across various regions of the country are grappling with record-breaking heat waves, threatening public health, safety, and infrastructure. Dangerous temperatures have prompted local leaders to take emergency action, including setting up temporary cooling centers, supplying hydration resources, and assisting with vulnerable populations.

Extreme heat is responsible for more deaths each year than most other natural hazards combined, yet, it is not included under FEMA's disaster declaration mechanism as an eligible event that could qualify for a major disaster declaration. The United States Conference of Mayors formally adopted [policy](#) this year urging Congress to support adding extreme heat under FEMA's disaster declaration mechanism to aid local governments' efforts in both preparing for and responding to extreme heat events. Of critical importance, enabling extreme heat events as eligible for disaster declarations would widen the amount of crucial federal resources available to cities as they continue to work towards saving lives, protecting infrastructure, and adapting to the impacts of a rapidly warming climate.

We are pleased to endorse this bipartisan bill and stand ready to work with you on this important legislation. Thank you again for your leadership on this issue. Please feel free to reach out to our staff: Judy Sheahan at jsheahan@usmayors.org or Laura DeKoven Waxman at lwaxman@usmayors.org for any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Cochran".

Tom Cochran
CEO & Executive Director
The U.S. Conference of Mayors